IN THE CLAIMS

Cancel claims 15-17, without prejudice as to the filing of a continuation application with claims directed to the same subject matter and amend claims 1, 2, 3, 8, 14 and 15 as follows:

- 1. (currently amended) A press for flattening dough pieces comprising:
- a main frame supportable on a floor of a workplace;
- a sub frame supportable by said main frame;
- adjustment mechanisms positioned between said sub frame and said main frame to permit leveling and adjustment of said sub frame relative to said main frame;
- attachment mechanisms for securing said sub frame to said main frame following adjustment of said sub frame relative to said main frame;
- a conveyor belt formed at least partially of a plastic material movably carried on at least one of said frames and presenting an upper horizontal surface along at least a portion of its length;
- at least one upper and one lower, vertically opposed, movable platens carried on at least one of said frames;
- both of said platens being movable in a longitudinal horizontal direction parallel with a moving direction of said upper horizontal surface of said belt;
- said upper one of said platens being movable in a vertical direction toward and away from said conveyor belt;
 - a linear actuator drivingly connected to said two movable platens;
 - a first servo motor drivingly connected to said linear actuator;
 - a carriage to which said two movable platens are mounted;
 - at least two linear guide rods supporting said carriage for linear movement;

a loading system for loading dough balls onto said moving upper surface of said conveyor belt;

said loading system comprising a transport mechanism arranged to receive dough balls in a sequential stream and to deliver said dough balls to said moving conveyor belt at a speed equal to a speed of said upper surface of said conveyor belt.;

said transport mechanism comprising a drop tube having an upper opening for receiving said sequential stream of dough balls, a pocket wheel positioned below an open bottom end of said drop tube and above said upper surface of said conveyor belt, said pocket wheel having a plurality of depressions in an outer circumference thereof to receive dough balls from said drop tube, and a second servo motor drivingly connected to said pocket wheel; and

a belt splicing hot press carried on <u>at least one of said [[frame]] frames</u> operatively engageable with said belt to splice together severed ends of said belt to form a continuous endless belt.

- 2. (currently amended) A press according to claim 1, including a control for receiving a signal indicative of a speed of said upper surface of said conveyor belt and for generating a signal to said <u>second</u> servo motor to control a speed of said <u>second servo</u> motor so that said dough balls carried in said depressions of said pocket wheel are delivered to said upper surface of said conveyor belt at a said speed of said upper surface.
- 3. (currently amended) A press according to claim 1, including belt hold down clamps secured to <u>one of said [[frame]] frames</u> and engageable with said upper surface of said belt.

- 4. (original) A press according to claim 1, wherein said belt splicing hot press comprises a vertically movable upper platen having a heating element therein and engageable with said upper surface of said belt and a stationary lower platen having a heating element therein and engageable with a lower surface of said belt.
- 5. (original) A press according to claim 1, including a support frame for said loading system, said support frame being mounted on wheels and being movable relative to said main frame.
- 6. (original) A press according to claim 1, including an arch style H frame carried on said carriage for supporting said upper platen.
- 7. (original) A press according to claim 6, wherein said H frame carries a hydraulic cylinder with a vertically movable piston.
- 8. (currently amended) A press according to claim [[1]] 7, wherein said movable piston includes an adjustable hard stop mechanism for preventing movement of said piston beyond a preselected downward position.
- 9. (original) A press according to claim 1, including a removable free form die plate secured to a lower face of said upper platen.
- 10. (original) A press according to claim 9 including a quick release retaining mechanism for securing said die plate to said upper platen.

11. (original) A press for flattening dough pieces comprising:

a main frame supportable on a floor of a workplace;

a sub frame supportable by said main frame;

adjustment mechanisms positioned between said sub frame and said main frame to permit leveling and adjustment of said sub frame relative to said main frame;

attachment mechanisms for securing said sub frame to said main frame following adjustment of said sub frame relative to said main frame;

an endless conveyor belt movably carried on at least said sub frame and presenting an upper horizontal surface along at least a portion of its length;

at least one movable platen carried on at least one of said frames and positioned to compressingly engage said conveyor belt.

- 12. (original) A press according to claim 11, wherein said at least one movable platen comprises two movable platens and both of said platens being movable in a longitudinal horizontal direction parallel with a moving direction of said upper horizontal surface of said belt and at least one of said platens being movable in a vertical direction.
- 13. (original) A press according to claim 11, wherein said adjustment mechanisms comprise jack screws extending between said main frame and said sub frame at a plurality of positions.
- 14. (currently amended) A press according to claim 11, wherein said attachment [[mechanism comprises]] mechanisms comprise a plurality of threaded fasteners.

15-17. (canceled)

18. (currently amended) A press for flattening dough pieces comprising: a frame supportable on a floor of a workplace;

an endless conveyor belt movably carried on said frame and presenting an upper horizontal surface along at least a portion of its length;

at least one movable platen carried on said frame;

a loading system for loading dough balls onto said moving upper surface of said conveyor belt;

said loading system comprising a transport mechanism arranged to receive dough balls in a sequential stream and to deliver said dough balls to said moving conveyor belt at a speed substantially equal to a speed of said upper surface of said conveyor belt.

- 19. (original) A press according to claim 18, wherein said transport mechanism comprises a drop tube having an upper opening for receiving said sequential stream of dough balls, a pocket wheel positioned below an open bottom end of said drop tube and above said upper surface of said conveyor belt, said pocket wheel having a plurality of depressions in an outer circumference thereof to receive dough balls from said drop tube, and a servo motor drivingly connected to said pocket wheel.
- 20. (currently amended) A press according to claim 19, including a control for receiving a signal indicative of [[a]] said speed of said upper surface of said conveyor belt and for generating a signal to said servo motor to control a speed of said motor so that said dough balls carried in said depressions of said pocket wheel are delivered to said upper surface of said conveyor belt at [[a]] said speed of said upper surface.
- 21. (original) A press according to claim 19, including a dough ball retaining shoe positioned along a circumference of said pocket wheel.

- 22. (original) A press according to claim 19, including a chute receiver and guide mounted at said upper opening of said drop tube.
- 23. (original) A press according to claim 19, including a photo eye located in said drop tube for detecting the presence of a dough ball in said drop tube.
- 24. (original) A press according to claim 18, including a support frame for said loading system, said support frame being mounted on wheels and being movable relative to said frame.
- 25. (original) A press according to claim 24, including attachment mechanisms for securing said support frame to said frame.
 - 26. (original) A press for flattening dough pieces comprising: a frame supportable on a floor of a workplace;
- a conveyor belt formed at least partially of a plastic material movably carried on said frame and presenting an upper horizontal surface along at least a portion of its length;
- at least one movable platen carried on said frame for pressing said dough pieces against said upper surface of said belt;
- a belt splicing hot press carried on said frame operatively engageable with said belt to splice together severed ends of said belt to form a continuous endless belt.
- 27. (original) A press according to claim 26, including belt hold down clamps secured to said frame and engageable with said upper surface of said belt.

- 28. (original) A press according to claim 26, wherein said belt splicing hot press comprises a vertically movable upper platen having a heating element therein and engageable with said upper surface of said belt and a stationary lower platen having a heating element therein and engageable with a lower surface of said belt.
- 29. (new) A press according to claim 18, wherein said transport mechanism comprises a series of drop tubes, each having an upper opening for receiving part of said sequential stream of dough balls, a pocket wheel positioned below an open bottom end of said drop tubes and above said upper surface of said conveyor belt, said pocket wheel having a plurality of depressions in an outer circumference thereof to receive dough balls from said drop tubes, and a servo motor drivingly connected to said pocket wheel.
- 30. (new) A press according to claim 29, including a series of guide tubes positioned between said series of drop tubes and said pocket wheel.